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## ABSTRACT

Four adult educators from the North East/Brazil Project spent three months in Brazil in 1986 on "pilot" education ventures. The areas selected for collaboration were health and safety for lay officers and induction/leadership training for women. "Methods" courses were selected as the means to train lay officers as discussion leaders, since they are normally built around everyday, real problems and issues and focus on methods, materials, and content easy to grasp. The four-day courses were designed to develop a network of grassroots activists for health and safety in their workplaces and communities. In 4 courses, some 75 people were equipped to run informal education sessions or short courses. Another effort was directed at providing assertiveness training and confidence building games for use in women's groups, especially voluntary organizations. A pack of materials (games) was developed in which reading and writing skills were kept to a minimum and that included credible role playing situations. The materials were presented and discussion focused on adapting materials to the Brazilian situation. (YLB)

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ED 271 606

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
NORTHERN DISTRICT

and

NORTH EAST/BRAZIL PROJECT

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN POPULAR EDUCATION

A REPORT ON THE STUDY AND WORK VISIT TO BRAZIL

February to April 1986

CE 044718

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## Introduction and Background

Four adult educators of the North East/Brazil Project went to Brazil for three months in 1986 to work on "pilot" education ventures. This was a return visit, following an exploratory study tour in 1985, and a further two members of the Project joined the original group of four for a short period of time, in ancillary roles.

The North East/Brazil project emerged out of efforts by the Latin America Study Group (itself affiliated to WEA Northern District) to promote regular contact with adult (or popular) education movements in Brazil in the early months of 1984. The venture was successful, but real dialogue was frustrated by the lengthy delays and the inherent limitations of written correspondence.

It was decided to attempt a study visit to Brazil to gain deeper, person-to-person knowledge, with the aim of initiating future co-operation. Travel grants were obtained from UNESCO's scheme of Study Visits for "leaders in workers' co-operative and adult education". The programme submitted included preparatory study (history, current affairs and Portuguese), practical arrangements, a detailed itinerary in Brazil, and follow-up work. Eleven people were selected for the study visit, all experienced adult educators - professional or lay - with the WEA Northern District and its members organisations. They joined the original study group on Brazil, which was then established as the North East/Brazil project.

The study visit lasted three weeks, divided into stays of similar length in the three main Brazilian cities: São Paulo, Recife and Rio de Janeiro. The programme was essentially exploratory, but with gaps for further discussions with particular projects and organisations. The major adult education organisation, FASE, was met at all three centres. Repeatedly, Brazilian colleagues suggested return visits by a smaller number, over a longer period of time. These suggestions led to more definite requests for a return party to undertake work in two areas of British provision for Trade Unions and other voluntary organisations that most interested the Brazilian organisations. Specifically, Health and Safety for lay officers and induction/leadership training for women were identified as the major potential areas for collaboration. It was requested that we elaborate study materials based on those current in Britain, and test them through "pilot" courses or seminars.

Four members of the study visit were selected for the return trip.

### a. For womens induction/leadership training:

Alison Harker - Tyneside Womens' Employment Project education worker;  
tutor on WEA, community and womens' education course;  
former team leader of South Tyneside Voluntary Project.

Janet Hannah - Occupational Studies Department, Newcastle Polytechnic,  
with part-responsibility for devising study materials;  
tutor on Trade Union, WEA and Co-operative courses,  
both women-only and mixed.

b. For health and safety:

- Peter Williams - Birmingham Health and Safety Advice Centre team leader; former co-ordinator of TUC/WEA Health and Safety provision (1980-85) and North East Works Hazards Group Secretary.
- Victor Cadaxa - WEA Northern District tutor organiser; former co-ordinator of TUC/WEA Health and Safety provision (1975-80); Secretary of Latin America Study Group.

Practical preparations and new contacts were undertaken over weekends from June 1985, including an intensive language course. Working in pairs, by subject, materials were selected, itineraries and proposals for courses and study materials were drawn up.

Financial assistance was sought, as follows:

For fares to Brazil:

- Tyne and Wear County Council - agreement in principle overtaken by abolition procedures for metropolitan counties.
- UNESCO - application not eligible
- Trade Union International Committees - no success to date
- Trust Funds - no success
- British Council £695 for Victor Cadaxa's fare.

For Living Expenses and Travel in Brazil

- International Federation of WEAs - £200
- CAFOD - £350
- Tyneside Womens Employment Project - £50

Two members of the party obtained paid leave. The obvious shortfall in finances was covered by bank loans prior to departure, use of cheapest accommodation and travel in Brazil, and de-facto subsidies from Brazilian organisations over the three months.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION FOR LAY OFFICERS - Victor Cadaxa

### Introduction

During our 1985 visit, this aspect of British provision was the one most regularly requested by Brazilian colleagues for further exploration. The need is genuine, as Brazil had the worst records of work accidents and ill-health recorded in the mid-1970s by the World Health Organisation. This situation has improved little since then, and industrial pollution threatens many communities. The membership of the study visit undoubtedly influenced the requests as four people were, or had been, engaged in this provision and brought plentiful samples of course programmes, materials and relevant background information. Thus the group was able to respond positively to concrete proposals for future work that came from DIESAT, the national Health and Safety research and information body, and from national officers of FASE, the largest adult education federation.

Peter Williams and I were both fortunate to obtain three months leave, allowing time for initial contact work, including some for Women's Education. Following the study visit, we originally envisaged to translate, shorten and adapt the British materials thought most appropriate, and build a pilot course programme largely around these. After much discussion and a little correspondence, we shifted the emphasis of the work for Brazil from the established "content" courses, discussed in 1985, to the recently-developed "methods" courses designed to train lay officers as discussion leaders.

### Methodology and Aims

To explain this distinction more fully: most of the Health and Safety provision in Britain's voluntary sector is carried out by Trade Unions, mainly through the TUC's education scheme. The bulk of this provision is in the form of day release courses over ten days, with the accent on mastering essential knowledge of, and more recently Trade Union policies in, Health and Safety.

These course are innovative in teaching methods and group dynamics, very attractive to Brazilian colleagues. They are, however, very intensive: in programme, use of written texts and audio-visual materials, and prior training of course leaders/tutors. Even in Britain, this provision is available only to a minority because of its demands on resources. Its complexity and intensity probably puts it beyond the interest (and capabilities) of ordinary members. The "methods" courses with their emphasis on diffusion and sharing of knowledge arose partly to compensate for this.

The "methods" approach seems particularly appropriate to Brazil, where the voluntary sector lacks financial, physical and human resources, and where primary education, even basic literacy, cannot be taken for granted. They are shorter, typically five days long, use basic (and cheaper!) study materials and few audio visuals. Normally based around everyday, real problems and issues, the accent of the course is away from professional standards, towards methods, materials and content that are easy to grasp. Crucially, they are intended to be "reproductive" with a methodology that is easy to adapt to discussion-based courses for any voluntary organisations and lay officers, not only Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives.

We were impressed in 1985 by the bonds and mutual identity between Trade Unions and Community Organisations. A series of "methods" courses would maximise numbers, the longterm impact of our visit, and strengthen this link.

Content and source materials are to a large extent determined by course members, with the aim of building education accessible to ordinary members. There is a large element of "devolution" of decision-making to individuals and groups. Eventually the course as a whole is democratically determined by the participants, encouraging self-reliance, dialogue and co-operation in decision-making. At the end, lay leaders emerge, trained for discussion sessions on short courses that involve ordinary members on the basis of programmes and problems they devise together - some "devolution" is envisaged on these informal course, too.

Building on the evident enthusiasm and dedication of this minority, our short courses would equip them to develop a network of grassroots activists for Health and Safety, in their workplaces and communities. Once experienced as informal education leaders, they could also work to strengthen their voluntary organisations on a broader plane. A minority of experienced adult educators and lay officers were to attend the courses, contributing to day-to-day work. They would act as the "trainers" for future discussion/short courses leaders (the "grand scheme" appears as Appendix A ).

#### Organisation

Our work fell into monthly phases, approximately as follows:

- February - contact work and preliminary discussions; evaluation and modification of proposed programme and materials (consultations took longer than the three weeks envisaged as the shift to "methods" courses was digested and explored).
- March - translation, adaptation and devising of study materials and course programme, practical organisation for courses, pre-course meeting and first four-day course (RIO).
- April - incorporation of changes, additions and new materials from Rio course. Four-day courses in São Paulo, Porto Alegre (southernmost State capital) and again São Paulo. Editing, with new materials from the courses, of finished course "pack"; final discussions and hand-over.

A number of related discussions were held after each course. We attended several meetings and addressed a weekend Health and Safety seminar, leading to excellent recruitment to the second Sao Paulo course.

The main problems in organising were lack of time and funds, and the absence of a truly coherent national framework through which to work. The problems of time and finance were eased for us in Rio by FASE (our base for seven weeks); in São Paulo by DIESAT, FASE, Santo André Chemical Workers and São Bernardo Metalworkers Unions; and in Pôrto Alegre by FASE and the Bankworkers Federation. In retrospect, we can see that our demands upon Brazilian organisations grew steadily beyond original estimates. It was dedication and massive overtime from colleagues, beyond any reasonable call, which made our intensive programme possible.

The lack of a coherent national framework reflects Brazil's industrial and local differences (plus an ingrained regionalism which permeates all organisational structures). DIESAT can overcome this only partially having no formal structure, though several affiliates, in Rio and a nascent one in Pôrto Alegre. Its lay governing body displays the Brazilian Labour movement's political and regional differences. Divergences about priorities surfaced when a sizeable programme of Health and Safety education at the grassroots was presented as a practical new departure. Nevertheless, DIESAT technical staff, lay officers and member-organisations remained our key collaborators and support.

#### Some experiences learnt?

Discussions revealed the need to shorten the five-day standard British course because potential recruits had difficulties in obtaining release from work. The four-day programme that evolved sacrificed little that was essential, in our opinion. Early pressures for three-day courses were resisted, with some difficulty. Other trends are of a wider, longer - term nature.

The British (and European) experience of elected shop floor Health and Safety Representatives and work place trade union Health and Safety Committees is gaining acceptance. For their part, trade unions in greater São Paulo use collective agreements to elect Health and Safety Reps even in the very smallest of firms. Several unions are engaged in community health surveys and centres, as part of their wider social responsibility, and as a further means to detect and act on industrial ill-health and pollution. Emerging neighbourhood health campaigns can link to these schemes; they involve the whole range of local associations, whatever the cause of the problem.

Most enlightening was the understanding gained of the work of Italian Health and Safety movements, little known and altogether ignored in Britain. Several initiatives are applicable to Britain just as much as Brazil, for instance neighbourhood health centres dealing with both community and industrial health.

The booklet produced by the Turin group for the joint Metalworkers' Unions is a model of clarity. Its analysis and superb graphic presentation put across points both of content and policy in our courses more clearly than our British materials. With this positive experience, a Portuguese language version of the Italian metalworkers' pamphlet(\*) is probable for Brazil this year.

Their concept of workplace "homogeneous groups" is revolutionary: small nuclei work informally to identify, discuss and act on Health and Safety issues. Such groups of grassroots members possibly provide the missing link between well-informed, overloaded elected representatives and an uninformed, uninvolved membership. We raised the Italian model on our courses, as a possible objective for informal education work after our departure.

#### The Courses

Trade Union premises were used for all four courses: Glassworkers in Rio, Santo André Chemical Workers (Chemical and pharmaceutical industries) and State CUT in São Paulo (manufacturing industry), Bankworkers' Federation in Pôrto Alegre. The number of course members varied from fifteen in Pôrto Alegre to twenty four in the São Paulo manufacturing course. The majority came from unions in production and service industries; only a few community organisation representatives were present, but several union members were heavily engaged in community or lay church groups. In any event, the members on all courses introduced wider social considerations themselves.

It was not possible to recruit all the professional educators we had hoped for because of the relatively short notice. An even more regrettable omission were the white collar unions. The most interested section, the bankworkers, were in the throes of major restructuring and redundancies following the government's drastic anti-inflation measures. Also absent were two of the very few national unions - the aircraft staff and airport workers - which must remain an important future target.

There were practical problems: shortage of time, failure of duplicating equipment, lack of basic teaching aids. Above all, translation proved problematic. British terms and concepts crept in, producing misunderstanding, even incomprehension. Only at the end of the process had we really mastered current Brazilian terminology.

On a subjective plane, major difficulties were timekeeping and the newness of our course. Punctuality in Brazil is taken less seriously than in Northern Europe, its observation becomes ever more elastic as one travels north. Voluntary groups have little notion, it seems, of a set starting time. In return course members did, however, frequently vote to stay behind for half or a full hour to make up for time lost.

Methods such as problem-solving in small groups, discussion-based courses, leaders rather than teachers, are all well-practised in the land of Paulo Freire. Yet our course style was not. The subject matter was new to some (at least in detail), whilst dissemination through informal education as the main objective was surprising to most. None had encountered the "methods" courses' uncompromising devolution of initiative and responsibility to course members. From the end of the first day, course members controlled the course, and could no longer obtain general directions from the leaders.

There was a small crisis on every course, sometime between the end of the first day and lunchtime on the second, though the precise time and hurdle varied each time. Then, a mini-catharsis, as working groups took on responsibility for specific sessions, learnt to control the direction of the course and assimilated this into their work. This was trying for course leaders nerves - it is much easier to respond to requests for direction than to wait for democracy to work! It was however, reassuring in terms of future self-directed work.

All courses produced some practical sessions for future training of leaders, but primarily programmes and detailed work for informal education. Those from the first course in Rio, added to our "course pack", did much to improve subsequent courses. The themes around which such sessions were built were real ones. They ranged from specific workplace hazards and how to deal with them, through Health and Safety and the position of women, to issues of Trade Union and public policy. They were conceived, not as "exercises", but as real discussions about and/or solutions to the issues raised.

The pack that finally emerged is rather different to what is found in Britain. Major modifications were introduced to the programme, following the Rio course. With each successive course, however, we found ourselves returning nearer to the original proposals. The eventual model programme (see appendix A) is largely that of the TUC'S "methods" courses (adapted to a four day course), proving the relevance of the British course structure, if not the detailed sessions.

The most positive aspect, perhaps, was participation. Once embarked in discussion, groups were at times difficult to stop (see "timekeeping" above). In an extrovert culture, there were few difficulties in getting people to give an account of group conclusions, some gave eloquent presentations. Posters to summarise or explain discussions improved, as courses went on. Some were outstanding and will hopefully be incorporated into future "course packs".

The high points were group dramatisations and presentations of study sessions designed. These provided some of the most delightful and fulfilling moments in our careers as adult educators, and the very funniest.

### Conclusion

At the end of the three months, we were exhausted, but had achieved more than we could possibly have expected. Four courses were run in different parts of the country (Rio and Porto Alegre are almost one thousand miles apart). A course pack was gradually polished up with sizeable sections by course members. Some seventy-five people are equipped to run informal education sessions or short courses, certainly with a more experienced partner. At least a dozen of these are capable of running training courses similar to our own, and improving on them. Three national organisations, have been involved in preliminary discussions and are committed to some follow-on work: DIESAT, the Health and Safety Committee of CUT, and FASE. We feel that the sinews of a network has emerged, well able to continue this work, each organisation separately or jointly with others. Perhaps our presence helped to sharpen up the debate on Health and Safety issues, organisation and provision, which was often only starting.

For our part, we've gained much from the discussions and experience: new ideas, new angles, a broader vision of existing practice and of the Italian experience. In time, we hope to make suggestions for improvements in Health and Safety educational materials in Britain and for "homogeneous group" follow-up. We've made personal and organisational links and established the mutual trust that makes expanded contact a real possibility. We've proven that a small group linked to a modest-sized voluntary organisation can contribute to international co-operation. Study programmes and materials from Britain have proven useful in the Brazilian context, given some modifications, and our colleagues could both learn from and contribute to the work in Britain. It makes us very keen for the future - the 1985 study visit and the work in 1986 were strictly within the wider context of promoting understanding, links and international collaboration between voluntary associations, Trade Unions or community groups in Latin America and Europe.

### Future Proposals

1. Promote permanent links between similar adult education and research organisations in the two countries.
2. Through these, promote links between similar or equivalent organisations in the voluntary sector.
3. Update contacts and information of the organisations, but in particular of their work, courses, new materials, Health and Safety (and other) information and publications.
4. Where possible, promote exchanges of personnel for longer periods, six to twelve months, to fully absorb experiences and enable personal contributions.
5. Target Organisations for cooperation and exchanges

DIESAT - Birmingham Health and Safety Advice Centre and/or TUSIU Health and Safety Project (Newcastle).

FASE - WEA (both regional and national exchanges).

IBASE - equivalent research organisations, eg TUSIU, Newcastle Polytechnic Occupational Studies. Also, Trade Union education and research departments, but as self-motivating, self-supporting ventures, in this latter case.

\* "L'AMBIENTE DI LAVORO: Nessun Fattore Nocivo", Sindacati Metal meccanici FIM/FIOM.UILM  
Publ: Ivar Oddone, Centro Nazionale Forumazione Sindacale FIOM/UIILM, Roma  
2° edizione, 1971.

## WOMEN IN VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

### Introduction

During our 1985 visit, it became clear that the educational needs of women had traditionally attracted low priority in Brazil. This situation was beginning to change, albeit slowly, and many of the organisations we visited were very interested in learning of our experience in Britain. Clearly, there was a wealth of information and experience to be shared, and this observation prompted our discussion of a return visit with educational materials and methods for womens' groups to be adapted to the Brazilian situation.

The return visit was planned over a period of ten months, during which we corresponded with relevant organisations and individuals in both Brazil and Britain. We sought advice on the best possible use of our time and resources given the limited duration of our stay of six weeks. From this, it became clear that we should concentrate on assertiveness-training and confidence-building games for use in womens' groups. The process of collecting and evaluating materials was then conducted over several months and those most adaptable and relevant to the Brazilian situation selected. Particular interest in the methodology adopted with womens' groups had been shown by our Brazilian colleagues, and particular emphasis was therefore placed on the preparation and presentation of this aspect of our work in Britain.

### Arrival and Preparation in Brazil

Our first meeting in Brazil was a "de-briefing" session with Victor and Peter where we were brought up to date with developments since our last visit. Recent economic and political initiatives directly affected the work of the organisations with which we were collaborating, so this background knowledge was clearly important. Developments within the organisations themselves were also crucial and, in the light of our up-dated information, we spent two days reviewing our materials and provisional programme before meeting FASE - Rio de Janeiro, our initial hosts.

With women staff of FASE's Rio office, we discussed our programme and the most efficient use of our time and materials. It was decided that, in the circumstances, São Paulo offered the greatest potential since so much Trade Union and community education is mushrooming there. FASE also believed that elements of our programme would be of particular interest to the associations of residents of Nova Iguaçu, a huge community in the State of Rio de Janeiro.

A meeting was held between ourselves and the leaders of the Nova Iguaçu community organisation. We were both very impressed with the progress made by the residents in both education and campaigning and concluded that we in Britain could learn some lessons from their experience. We swapped information and materials and concluded that the discussion was mutually educational. It was also agreed that we should inform each other of any major developments in the future. This organisation was one of those which received copies of our final pack of materials produced by the end of our visit.

### The Sao Paulo Programme

Sao Paulo was, as anticipated, the major focus of our programme. An exploratory meeting with FASE - Sao Paulo identified a specific community group with which to work in the presentation and adaptation of our materials. In addition, specific proposals for work with the São Bernado Metalworkers Union and the Sao Paulo State Central Unica dos Trabalhadores (CUT) were also agreed.

FASE-São Paulo requested that we produce (in Portuguese) a pack of confidence-building and assertiveness-training games which work well with working class womens groups here in Britain. Whilst this pack would be distributed by FASE to all interested groups, it was decided to discuss and pilot it with one specific womens community project - Casa da Mulher at Grajaú.

Our initial meeting with Casa da Mulher produced an enthusiastic response - the British experience clearly struck cords with the women of Grajaú!

In preparing and piloting the pack, however, we had to take into consideration several important cultural difference. Most importantly, literacy levels are generally low in areas such as Grajaú. Thus, games requiring reading or writing skills had to be kept to a minimum. Role play situations had to be credible, so alterations from our original text had to be made to appear relevant to the Brazilian situation.

The process of piloting the material proved invaluable! We could not have foreseen some of the issues and problems which arose - many helpful and constructive suggestions were put forward by the women themselves, whose confidence benefitted from the knowledge that their participation and contributions were central to the successful development of the pack.

Sadly, there was insufficient time for the organisation of a trainers workshop where we could then present the pack to a variety of trainers from the city. There was, however, a strong possibility that this would occur after our departure and would probably benefit from the fact that it would be presented by the women of Grajaú rather than ourselves.

Our meeting with women employees of the São Bernado Metalworkers' Union revealed a high degree of interest in the organisation, content and methodology of courses for women trade unionists in Britain. We were then invited to a seminar with the women executive committee of the State CUT to present this information.

Had more time been available the committee would also have liked us to pilot a womens trade union course with them. Given the time constraints, however, we had to settle for a presentation of the materials and a discussion of how they might be adapted to the Brazilian situation.

### Conclusion

In terms of achieving the objectives with which we set out to Brazil, our visit was undoubtedly a success. We left behind a locally-piloted pack for use by all interested womens' organisations to be distributed through FASE, one of the country's foremost and well-respected national popular research organisations. In the process of its compilation, we learned a great deal about methodology and content in adult womens education which we could usefully apply to our work in Britain.

Our major constraints were lack of time and money. Had more of the former been available, we could have extended our work with the Trade Unions to provide more specific materials for use on womens courses. They do, however, have copies of the general pack we produced, elements of which could be usefully applied at the introductory stage of Union course.

Had more money been available, we could have travelled more widely within Brazil

and worked with organisations and groups in other major industrial areas and the interior, Again, however, the distribution of our pack by a national organisation such as FASE should ensure its availability in many parts of the country.

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# LEADERS' COURSES

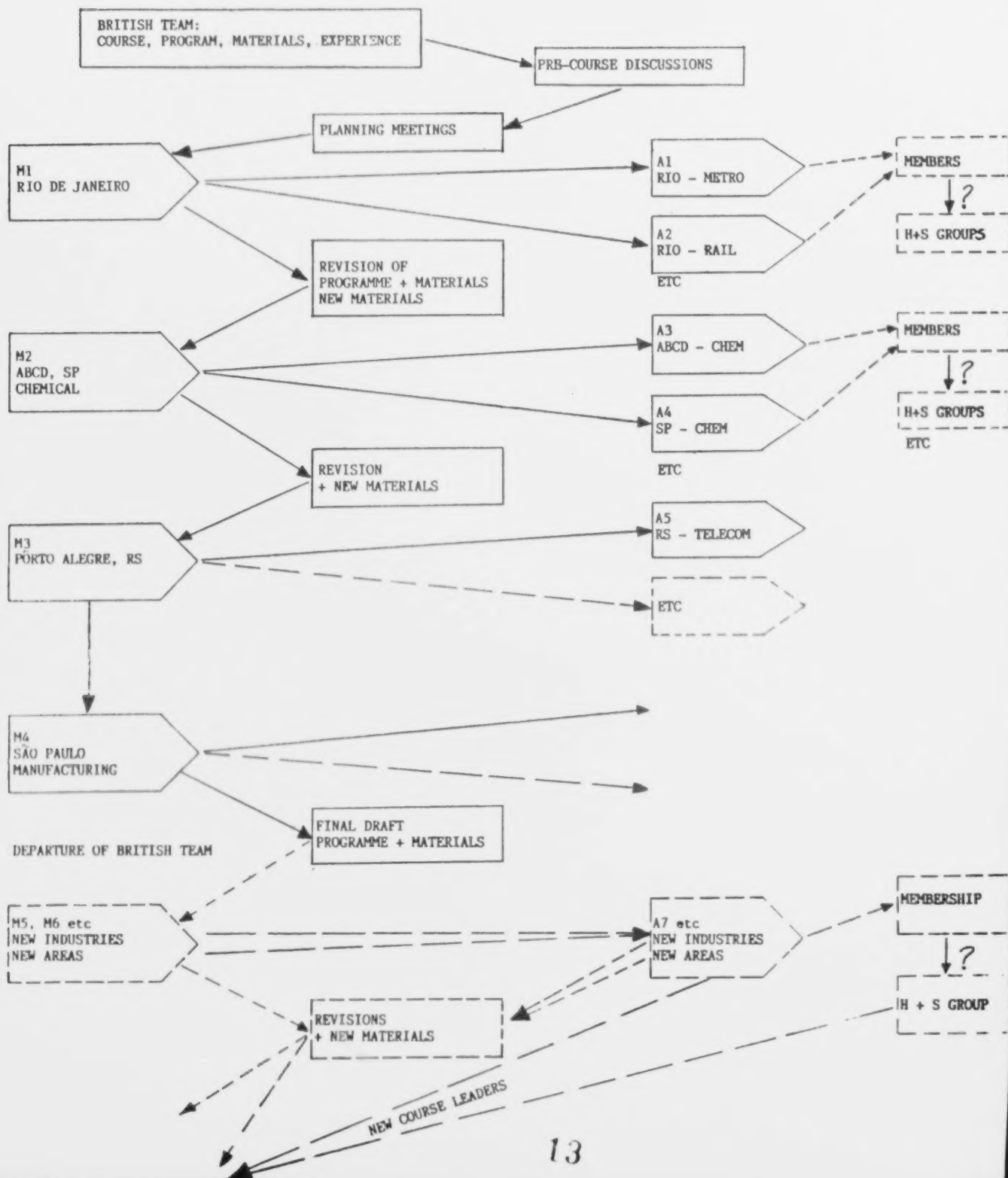
DIESAT committees and staff  
Trade Union executive members  
T.U. members of workplace Safety Committees (CIPAs) and factory commissions  
Popular education and research workers  
Community leaders involved with Health & Safety

## ACTIVISTS' SHORT COURSES

Trade Union executive members  
TU Factory organisations  
TU Health committees  
TU Health and Safety delegates  
Activists in TUs and Community organisations

## INFORMAL EDUCATION

Members  
"Homogeneous" Health and Safety Groups



APPENDIX B

COURSE FOR LEADERS IN TRADE UNION EDUCATION: HEALTH AND WORK ENVIROMENT

P R O G R A M

|       |                                                                    |                                                                                          |                                                                  |                                                                       |                                                                                                  |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 1 | 9:00 to 11:00<br>- Course introduction<br>- Personal introductions | 11:00 to 12:30<br>- Evaluation of educational experiences                                | 13:30 to 14:30<br>- What kind of education for trade unions?     | 14:30 to 16:00<br>- Trade Union objectives for health                 | 16:00 to 17:00<br>- Course meeting<br>. Evaluation of day 1<br>. Decisions on the course program |
| Day 2 | 9:00 to 11:00<br>- Work on case study I                            | 11:00 to 12:30 and 13:30 to 14:30<br>- Preparing education meetings (case study I)       |                                                                  | 14:30 to 16:00<br>- Education meeting (Practical case study I)        | 16:00 to 17:00<br>- Course meeting<br>. Report-back<br>. Evaluation                              |
| Day 3 | 9:00 to 11:00<br>- Ways of communicating                           | 11:00 to 12:30<br>- Work on case study II                                                | 13:30 to 17:00<br>- Preparing education meetings (Case study II) |                                                                       |                                                                                                  |
| Day 4 | 9:00 to 11:00<br>- Education meetings practical (Case study II)    | 11:00 to 12:30<br>- Report-back<br>- Evaluation<br>- How to improve educational meetings | 13:30 to 15:00<br>- Plans for education in your trade union      | 15:00 to 17:00<br>- Final meeting<br>. Course evaluation<br>. closure |                                                                                                  |